



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 171

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

No. 117

## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 11 a.m.

## Senate

TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Architect and Creator of our destinies, we marvel at Your power, majesty, and might. From the beginning, Your grace has underlain the foundations of our lives; so we ask that You would lead us in the paths of Your purposes.

Lord, today, awaken in our lawmakers the ability to see the opportunities that exist in the challenges they face. May this knowledge motivate them to move forward with faith and optimism. Show them unused resources that can be mobilized to solve problems and to make dreams come true.

Lord, when they experience doubts and uncertainties, give them the wisdom to ask You for guidance that will save them from all false choices.

And, Lord, remember all who are involved in the catastrophic storm in Texas.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Iowa.

### AFGHAN EVACUEES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, since 2021, I sounded the alarm about the former Biden administration's failure to vet Afghan evacuees. Instead of coming clean, the previous administration dismissed and failed to answer my oversight request.

For years, the Biden administration hid from the American people known vulnerabilities in the vetting process that goes under the names of Operation Allies Welcome and Operation Allies Refuge. The Department of Homeland Security inspector general eventually exposed those vetting failures, and, just last month, so too did the Department of Justice inspector general. Both inspectors general substantiated vetting failures that I have raised for years.

Recently, I was informed by the Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard of new information. My office has been told that of the more than 100,000 Afghan evacuees, as of August 2022, 1.6 percent had links to terrorism

or other derogatory information. It happens that that is over 1,600 people who, at that time, posed a potential threat to our homeland and our people.

At that time, all 1,600 were located in the United States. Now, naturally, since then, some may have left, some may have been deported, and it is unclear who remains.

Based on past briefings provided by the FBI, it is clear they began to investigate these evacuees years ago. I strongly urge the current FBI and intelligence community leadership to aggressively investigate those evacuees who require it and bring these matters to a close.

I am also calling on the Trump administration to ensure that its findings are declassified to the fullest extent possible. Why? Because the public has a right to be made aware—in fact, fully aware—of the Biden administration's failure to vet Afghan evacuees.

Transparency brings accountability, and in this case, that transparency is important because it is a matter of public safety.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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# RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

## CENTRAL TEXAS FLOODS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I begin, I just want to say that I join Americans around the country in praying for the victims of the torrential flooding in Texas this weekend. More than 100 have been reported dead—among them, at least 28 children. It is a moment of unfathomable pain for so many, and my prayers are with the grieving parents and the grieving families.

I am grateful for the efforts of the rescue workers, military members, and volunteers who put themselves in harm's way to rescue flood victims. And it would be wrong to acknowledge rescuers without also mentioning the everyday Americans who died in the floods trying to save others, like the camp director who died trying to get his campers to safety.

The Scriptures say:

A greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

These are the people we would all hope to be at the moment of our testing.

Again, my thoughts and prayers are with all the victims of these deadly floods and with those who continue to work to rescue them.

## ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in the runup to last year's elections, Republicans made some promises to the American people. We promised to turn the page on the failures of the last 4 years, to help working families and to get our economy moving, to make our country stronger and more secure. Last week, we delivered legislation that will help fulfill those promises. That starts with permanent tax relief for hard-working Americans.

Back in 2017, during the first Trump administration, Republicans passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, legislation that cut Americans' tax rates, doubled the child tax credit, and nearly doubled the standard deduction. But without action from Congress, a substantial part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act would have expired this year, and that would have meant a huge tax hike for hard-working Americans—some \$2,500 for people in my State of South Dakota.

We were determined not to let that happen—not next year, not ever—and I am proud that our bill permanently extends all of the individual tax relief from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. That means lower tax rates for every income level, permanently, an enhanced \$2,200 child tax credit that is now linked to inflation, and the higher standard deduction.

And we did more than that. We included no tax on overtime, no tax on

tips, an even bigger standard deduction for seniors, and new investment accounts that will help the next generation get a running start on their American dream. In a word, the American people will be able to keep more of their hard-earned money instead of sending it to the Federal Government in Washington, and they will have the freedom to spend, invest, and save more of their own money how they see fit.

In addition to providing permanent relief for American families, our bill is about getting our economy moving again. The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act had our economy firing on all cylinders: more jobs, higher wages, companies large and small investing in America. The 2017 tax cuts transformed the Tax Code so that it would encourage growth, and it worked, but not all of that reform was permanent until now.

Now, with the bill we passed last week, all of the 2017 pro-growth reforms are a permanent fixture of our Tax Code. That includes lower rates for small- and medium-sized businesses, the job-creating 199A small business deduction, and investment incentives that free up cash for small businesses, farmers, and ranchers to invest in their operations and in their employees. And, once again, we went even further than the 2017 reforms. We included full expensing for new factories and factory improvements to fuel economic growth and made-in-America goods and jobs.

And we included an even higher death tax threshold that will spare more family farms, ranches, and businesses from a potentially devastating tax, not to mention the expense of planning for it.

Any bill that is about a stronger, more prosperous America would be incomplete if it didn't make America's farmers and ranchers stronger. Agriculture is the lifeblood of this country, but the last few years have been incredibly challenging for our agricultural producers. Our bill tackles those challenges head-on by bolstering programs that farmers and ranchers depend upon. It raises reference prices for every covered commodity; it expands crop insurance coverage and affordability; and it supports risk management, disaster assistance, conservation programs, and critical research and disease prevention programs that are essential to a robust agriculture sector.

With this bill, Republicans are also making America more secure. We are ending the era of open borders by making a generational investment in border security. We are finally finishing the border wall. We are hiring more border agents and giving them the tools they need to keep illegal immigrants and illegal drugs out of our country. And we are hiring more ICE officers and enhancing our capacity to detain and deport criminal illegal immigrants who have taken up residence in our country.

We are also making a major investment to bolster our national defense and build a military that can defeat the threats of today and tomorrow. We are boosting shipbuilding, expanding our Air Force fleet, and investing in drones and counterdrone technology. We are restoring our defense production capacity so that we can make more munitions here in America. We are protecting the homeland with missile defense and nuclear modernization—and more. Our bill is no substitute for robust yearly defense funding, but it gives us a head start on the long-term investments necessary to turn our readiness deficiencies around and ensure that America's military is the strongest in the world for years to come.

One often overlooked part of our national security is our energy security, and our legislation will help ensure that America has a reliable and affordable energy supply for the long term. Our bill also helps deliver on Republicans' promise of a smaller and smarter government. Our bill achieves \$1½ trillion in Byrd-compliant savings, including the first real entitlement reform in decades—reform that will put the programs in question on a more sustainable path for today's recipients and for tomorrow's.

I am proud that Republicans are delivering on our promises to the American people, and I can't wait to see our policies begin working to help build a safer, a stronger, and a more prosperous country. It is going to be great. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

# RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

## CENTRAL TEXAS FLOODS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the Senate's thoughts and prayers are with all the victims' families and communities devastated by the flash floods in Texas.

The reports from Texas were both heartbreaking and terrifying at the same time—water rising over 25 feet in a matter of minutes, entire buildings and homes swept away, hundreds of people stranded.

As of this morning, 105 people have died during the floods—27 children. To see the pictures of those children, the little beautiful faces, which I saw published in one of our New York papers this morning, just breaks your heart and stays with you—and the agony, of